

REMARKS

In response to the Restriction Requirement, Applicants elect Group I, claims 1-12 and 18-24 for examination. This election is made without traverse. However, Applicants note that contrary to the assertion of the Examiner (see Restriction Requirement, page 3), continued Examination of Group I and Group II together should not be a serious burden on the Examiner because the Examiner has already examined claims of these two groups together in 6 separate Office Actions on the merits.¹

Claims 1-27 are all the claims currently pending in this Application. Claims 13-17 and 25-27 are withdrawn.

With this Amendment, Applicants amend claims 1-12, 19, and 22-24 for purposes of clarity and in order more fully to cover various aspects of Applicants' invention as disclosed in the specification. Withdrawn claims 13-17 and 26 are also amended. Entry of these amendments is respectfully requested.

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned attorney at the telephone number listed below.

¹ See Office Actions of: October 7, 2003; April 13, 2004; July 28, 2004; March 21, 2005; August 25, 2005; and March 14, 2006.

AMENDMENT IN RESPONSE TO RESTRICTION
U.S. Application no. 09/828,889

Q63958

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

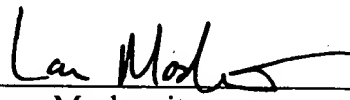
Respectfully submitted,

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